

ESSAYONS

forward



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Gulf Region Division, Iraq - Volume 6, Issue 3

March 2009

BUILDING STRONG SM

تصفح المقالات العربية



- The future of operations, maintenance, sustainment in Iraq
- Basra's new courthouse sign of progress for judiciary system
- GRD announces initiative for Iraqi women-owned businesses

ESSAYONS *Forward*

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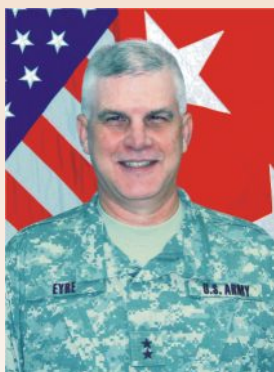


Iraqi workers help construct the new \$1.16 million Al Jazera gymnasium in Baghdad.



Gulf Region Division Cultural Advisor Marcus Sani poses a question to Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, USACE Commander, during a Town Hall meeting March 22.

Message from ME



Embracing Change in the 'Year of Transition'

It's a bit cliché, but so true: the only constant is change. Throughout the Gulf Region Division this year, we will face multiple changes – the Multi-National Force-Iraq command

and control transformation, the GRD transformation, the International Zone transition and the GRD headquarters move... Troop and contractor numbers in Iraq are decreasing; our budgets are getting tighter; and we are seeing U.S. Army Corps of Engineers priorities shift to Afghanistan and the economic stimulus package back home.

However, the mission here remains the same – but everything we do is situational – and has to be flexible to adjust with the changing operational environment. That means WE have to be flexible, be responsive, and adjust with the associated activities and requirements.

MNF-I Commanding General Ray Odierno is referring to 2009 as the 'Year of Transition,' and WE must be ready to rise to

the challenge and embrace that transition to help make it successful. It is wasted energy to resist changes – none of this was ever intended to be permanent.

I ask each of you to be patient with the changes ahead, be flexible, but most of all – be accepting and positive. What you are doing here is truly making a better life for the people of Iraq, and you're doing it at a time that is quite simply historical. Keep up the great work, and be ready for whatever lies ahead. This is an exciting time to be part of the GRD Family, and I am honored to serve with each and everyone on our team today – and tomorrow!

GRD is BUILDING STRONG™ foundations!

فرقة منطقة الخليج تبني اسساً قوية

*Maj. Gen. Mike Eyre
Gulf Region Division
Commander*

From the desk of the CSM



Taking care of people is best job in the world

During the past several months, many of you have asked me what my job is and what my duties entail. The Gulf Region Division is such a diverse organization with a mix of

personnel types, statuses, ranks and duties it can be a challenge to sort out who does what.

Many U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees have never worked with a Command Sergeant Major; therefore, it is understandable that you have questions regarding the roles and responsibilities of a CSM. Frankly, even within military ranks, the understanding of the CSM and his/her duties vary as each of the services has different expectations of their senior noncommissioned officers.

My job can be best summarized in this short quote:

My job is people – everyone is my business.

I dedicate my time and energy to their needs: their health, morale, discipline, and welfare.

I grow in strength by strengthening my people.

My job is done in faith; my people build faith in what we do.

My job is people and therefore, everyone is my business.

What does this mean to you? It means no matter what status

you serve in GRD, your health, morale, discipline and welfare is my primary concern. Based on my observations, I make recommendations to the Commanding General and his staff regarding those matters. The task is daunting to say the least, but it has thus far become the single greatest experience and challenge of my career.

A year or two ago, I never would have thought it possible for all of us to be here together, under these circumstances. Yet as each day rolls by, keeping everyone together has become a pleasure and an honor.

Some of my counterparts tell me they wouldn't want my job for anything in the world.

I say I wouldn't want any other job in the world.

Everything we do here ties together in some way for the common cause and so, "Everyone is my business". Business is great and I hope it remains that way. I look forward to serving at your sides, continuing to accomplish the impossible.

Thanks for what you do!

ESSAYONS! Army Strong!

*Command Sgt. Maj. Richard "Mitch" Prater
Gulf Region Division*

Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq focuses on future: operations, maintenance, sustainment

BY NICOLE DALRYMPLE
GULF REGION DIVISION

With more than 4,400 projects completed, and many major reconstruction programs of the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, concluding, GRD's Operations, Maintenance and Sustainment program is gaining ground and increased significance.

The OMS program is aimed at supporting the U.S. Embassy's goals to ensure the government of Iraq and the Iraqi people are properly prepared to operate and maintain the country's new infrastructure, and assume responsibility for the nation's continued reconstruction.

The focus began to morph in the third quarter of fiscal year 2008, according to Steve Rivera, deputy of GRD's reconstruction division. "We began to see indications that focus was moving away from brick and mortar construction and towards training initiatives. We saw this reinforced when Ambassador Crocker and Gen. Petraeus testified in front of Congress," he said.

On April 8, 2008, Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker, then U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, and Gen. David H. Petraeus, then Multi-National Force – Iraq commander, testified before the Senate Armed Service Committee.

In his remarks, Crocker stated, "As Iraq is now earning the financial resources it needs for bricks and mortar construction through oil production and export, our focus has shifted to capacity development.... The era of U.S. funded major infrastructure projects is over. We are seeking to ensure that our assistance, in partnership with the Iraqis, leverages Iraq's own resources."

Capacity development is a phrase commonly used to explain efforts to train, equip and develop the Iraqi workforce into an entity that can ultimately be self sufficient.

Maj. Gen. Michael R. Eyre, commander of GRD, has described 2009 as an "historic year for us all as we look ahead to closing out major projects and programs and turn more and more over to the government of Iraq."

"For every facility that GRD completes there is a letter of acceptability signed by the government of Iraq," Rivera explained. "Included in that agreement is a letter of sustainability, where the government of Iraq agrees to take responsibility of operations and maintenance for the facility. That willingness to take responsibility for O&M is part of the cost-sharing agreement between Iraq and the United States."

To assist in this transfer of responsibility, GRD has a robust OMS program to help set the Iraqis up for success, Rivera explained. Within every essential services sector GRD has worked, O&M training has been provided in some form to ensure users know how to operate and care for the equipment and facilities entrusted to them.

Since 2003 GRD has invested \$308.5 million in its OMS program and an additional \$13.85 million is linked to ongoing initiatives.

OMS initiatives include:

- During 2007 and 2008, contractors working for GRD conducted 88 training sessions and workshops for 1,072 Ministry of Electricity staff in both technical and management areas. This effort is equivalent to 544 days of training.
- At seven 132 kilovolt substations being prepared for commissioning, eight Ministry of Electricity personnel at each station are being provided onsite training. Additionally, one month's O&M oversight will be provided by the contractor after

the project's handover.

- Three months of post-commissioning O&M support was provided at the recently completed Sadr City R3 water treatment plant. A team of 14 Iraqi associates, working for GRD, provided daily assistance in all areas of plant operations and maintenance. The plant has the capacity to provide 25 million gallons of clean, quality water to 192,000 people in Sadr City.

- GRD is assisting the Ministry of Health with a \$16.1 million initiative to develop its staff's capability to conduct facilities management and maintenance management. The program is focused on approximately 20 of the most heavily used clinics in Iraq. The initiative includes training and hands-on exercises on maintaining facilities, bio-medical systems, medical laboratories, and dental and X-ray equipment.

"From our perspective the project is not complete just because it has been accepted by the government of Iraq, at the local or national level," explained Richard Hancock, GRD's director of programs. "Many of the new facilities involve modern, more efficient processes that the local operators may not be familiar with. We have a robust program dedicated to instilling training and knowledge to the work force at all levels, from mid-level managers to technicians."

Staffing properly for the operation and maintenance of completed facilities will produce thousands of jobs for Iraqis, Rivera added. He estimates that for every worker who helped build a project, three people will be employed by the project whether through working on site, providing supplies, doing maintenance or providing cleaning service.

"There is so much potential for Iraqi contractors who want to develop their skills in facilities-focused engineering services, such as HVAC [heating, ventilation and air conditioning], low voltage electrical, mechanical systems and facilities management support," Rivera added.



USACE project engineer Simeon Francis examines filter actuators as they are being cleaned at the Sadr R-3 Water Treatment Plant in Baghdad. The plant began operating in mid-June 2008 and was fully operational on Sept. 27.



Program manager for GRD's Women's Advocate Initiative, Azza Humadi, left, introduces Brig. Gen. William Phillips, commander, Joint Contracting Command - Iraq and Afghanistan.

Gulf Region Division announces new initiatives for Iraqi women-owned businesses

BY RICK HAVERINEN
GULF REGION DIVISION

The Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq announced two initiatives March 21 that will expand Iraqi businesswomen's ability to gain work with GRD.

GRD unveiled the initiatives at the "Women-Owned Business and the Future Conference" hosted by GRD at Baghdad's Al-Rasheed Hotel.

U.S. Navy Capt. Joseph Konicki, director of military programs, GRD, told the 50-member audience the Division set aside a percentage of contracts in the Foreign Military Sales and Iraqi Security Force Funds programs to award to women-owned businesses in Iraq.

The contract set-asides mark the first time GRD is tapping a portion of its Foreign Military Sales program, which is ultimately funded by the Iraqi government to build its own military-related infrastructure. The additional Iraqi Security Force Funds program, which will also have a set-aside portion for Iraqi businesswomen, is U.S.-funded.

Konicki said Iraqi businesswomen are welcome to bid on contracts for any projects they feel competent to complete, not just the percentage of work specifically set aside for them.

The conference, organized by Azza Humadi, program manager for GRD's Women's Advocate Initiative, opened a dialogue for strategies to keep the program running when U.S. forces withdraw from Iraq.

"The title, 'Women Owned business and the Future,' means we have finished

an era, and are entering a new one," Humadi told the audience. She said the drawdown of the U.S. presence in Iraq will certainly affect her program, as fewer people will require help from Iraqis who provide service and construction work.

Americans and Iraqis who have supported the initiative want to ensure the program is stable and able to continue in the years to come.

"I personally believe that we have made great strides in the last few years of supporting Iraqi women-owned business," said Brig. Gen. William Phillips, commander, Joint Contracting Command - Iraq and Afghanistan, "but in the end, I do not think that what we have done is enough.

"I think it is important that we maintain the momentum that we have achieved to date of making women a stronger and larger contributor to the Iraqi economy," Phillips said.

That theme also was expressed by representatives of the government of Iraq.

"We feel we are on the threshold of a new era in which the woman is looking forward to playing a big role in political, economic, social, and cultural life," said Iraqi Member of Parliament Shatha al-Musawi. "The global financial crisis and low oil prices have forced the government of Iraq to resort to an ascetic budget. That stopped the hiring of new civil servants, so we are looking forward to the private sector to hire the unemployed."

Iraqi Minister of Human Rights Wijdan

Mikhael said, "Women's rush to the fields of work and production enables them to establish a new reality that cannot be denied."

Mikhael referenced a survey held by the Central Organization for Statistics, noting, "Thirty-seven percent of (Iraqi) women are unemployed, and 19 percent of men are jobless. It is pitiful to see women and children being employed in some factories just because they are used to getting low wages."

The impoverished status of Iraqi women, especially the many widows in the nation, was reflected in a survey published March 8 by Oxfam International. Oxfam reported that 52 percent of the women in its survey were unemployed.

JCC - I/A created the Women's Owned Business Initiative in 2005. Stanley Baker Hill operates the Women's Advocate Initiative program under contract with GRD to market and recruit Iraqi businesswomen. JCC - I/A conducts the training for requirements and all the mechanics of announcing and awarding the women's contracts, as part of its much larger mission.

Since 2004 GRD has completed 4,400 projects in Iraq, valued at nearly \$7 billion. JCC - I/A has awarded approximately \$450 million to women-owned businesses since 2005, when the program began. Women-owned businesses in Iraq were awarded \$187 million in contracts during fiscal year 2008.



Command Sgt. Maj. Richard "Mitch" Prater talks to noncommissioned officers from throughout the theater of operations during the first Joint Noncommissioned Officers Summit held March 12-13.

“Engineering a bridge across a river of hopelessness” GRD noncommissioned officers join forces at summit

BY GULF REGION DIVISION PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division held its first Joint Noncommissioned Officer Summit March 12-13 at the headquarters of Gulf Region Central district on Victory Base Complex. The Summit gathered all GRD NCOs throughout the theater of operations in one central location to share ideas and hone individual skills related to leadership training and construction quality assurance and quality control. The Summit also was a venue to enhance the overall readiness of the division's NCO corps.

Maj. Gen. Michael R. Eyre, commanding general, GRD, opened the event.

“My father was an NCO,” Eyre told the audience. “And the first piece of advice that he gave me as an officer was to always listen to my NCOs. NCOs have made me the officer that I am today, and I have reached this level of success as a direct result of positive NCO leadership.”

The Summit continued with high profile guest speakers including the Iraqi Sergeant Major of the army, Command Sgt. Maj. Adel Abd Algabar; Multi-National Force - Iraq Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence K. Wilson; Sgt. Maj. Daniel Terwilliger of Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq; Command Master Chief Jerry W. Pittman of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command; and Air Force representatives.

The speakers' unique background and years of experience enabled them to discuss a wide range of issues. Each discussed how GRD enables the overall success of the missions of their respective services or commands.

“GRD is engineering a bridge across a river of hopelessness,” said Adel, Iraq's highest ranking NCO, adding that it is the GRD NCOs who are building the bridge. “GRD and the NCOs in it show that regardless of your service or country, NCOs get the job done.”

GRD Command Sgt. Maj. Richard “Mitch” Prater agreed. “Regardless of where I go in Iraq, I am consistently amazed at the professional work being performed by all branches of the U.S. military assigned to GRD. Many units have joint manning, but no one else can boast that they executed the completion and ongoing work of thousands of projects in Iraq, valued at billions of dollars. It's all in direct support of the citizens of Iraq, the government of Iraq and U.S. military operations – and it's all done with the support of NCOs from the U.S. Army, Air Force, and Navy.”

GRD celebrated the Army's campaign, the ‘Year of the NCO,’ by unveiling a poster showing the joint NCO capabilities that GRD brings in capacity development and infrastructure rebuilding throughout the theater of operations.

The Summit ended with an NCO Development Class held at the site where Medal of Honor Recipient Sergeant 1st Class Paul Smith was killed in 2003.



Iraqi Sergeant Major of the army, Command Sgt. Maj. Adel Abd Algabar, speaks at the joint summit.

“ These buildings really help to alter the welfare of the entire community. This kind of service through action to help children can be so powerful that it inspires us to complement all our achievements with a spirit of compassion.

*Inez Bergerson,
project engineer
with the Gulf
Region Division,
U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers
in Iraq*

Iraqi workers raising the steel girders safely for the new \$1.16 million Al Jazera gymnasium in Baghdad.



Youth center projects bring unity, stability to Baghdad communities

BY KENDAL SMITH
GULF REGION CENTRAL DISTRICT

“Changing the attitude and the politics of any country must begin with the young people,” said Inez Bergerson, project engineer with the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq.

Bergerson, who is overseeing two youth center projects in Baghdad, said constructing recreational facilities builds inspiration and pride for a neighborhood. “These buildings really help to alter the welfare of the entire community. This kind of service through action to help children can be so powerful that it inspires us to complement all our achievements with a spirit of compassion that touches the whole world.”

The two USACE projects in Baghdad are designed to reach the city’s youth, with that goal in mind. One project is a \$2.54 million Al Araby Club Youth

Center in the Muhalla 333 area of Baghdad. The two-story addition includes a parking lot and new swimming pool. The other is Al Jazera Gymnasium, a \$1.16 million project for an 18,000-square-foot concrete masonry facility with a corrugated metal roof, which is being constructed in the Muhalla 351 area. Both projects are approximately 25 percent complete.

In typical Iraqi fashion, to celebrate the successful roof-raising on Al Jazera Gymnasium with no incidents or accidents, a lamb was sacrificed and prepared as a meal for the entire community. For the workers this is a usual practice, but to include the neighborhood emphasized the prominence for the surrounding area.

Iraqi Project Engineer A (name withheld for security) agrees with Bergerson, but makes his point about

the significance for overall Iraq stability. “If the neighborhood people and children are able to enjoy facilities like this gym and the new Al Araby Youth Center,” he said, “they will be less likely to be politically influenced by the different sectarian groups or violence. After the war, there is no place for people to go to socialize. The theatres, social clubs, theme parks and green areas have been closed, so these additions are good for our people.”

Al Araby is scheduled for completion in August 2009; the gym should be complete by the end of April.

Both USACE projects are in the Sha’ab Hay neighborhood of northern Baghdad’s Adhamiyah District. Sha’ab means “people” in Arabic and would seem to be an appropriate place to demonstrate compassion for Baghdad’s youth and the nation’s future.



The new Al Jumhoury Primary Healthcare Clinic in the southern city of Diwaniyah, provides much needed basic medical care to a neighborhood of approximately 15,000 people in Diwaniyah.

Diwaniyah residents welcome new Primary Healthcare Center

BY ALICIA EMBREY
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Local townspeople, Iraqi and American officials joined together March 8 to mark the opening of the new Al Jumhoury Primary Healthcare Clinic in Diwaniyah.

During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Dr. Abdulameer al-Obaidy, Diwaniyah's director general of health, thanked the local Provincial Reconstruction Team, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division, and the Iraqi contractor for their efforts in building such a quality facility.

Ahmed A. Razak, a senior Iraqi deputy resident engineer with GRD, pointed out that the state-of-the-art clinic includes four doctors' offices with adjoining exam rooms, two dental exam rooms, an X-ray room, a laboratory, a pharmacy, two treatment rooms, and a classroom. "It is designed to provide basic medical care for this neighborhood's 15,000 residents, and offers advanced diagnostic and monitoring capabilities for acute and chronic illnesses," Razak added.

"Building this clinic took cooperation, courage and resolve, especially on the part of those Iraqis who helped design the project, oversaw its construction, and did the hard work of building it," said Michael Klecheski, the team leader for Diwaniyah's PRT.

"Constructing facilities such as this one

required a partnership between Iraq and the United States," Klecheski added.

"May this clinic always stand as a symbol of what working together can accomplish."

Throughout Iraq, GRD has completed and turned over 132 primary healthcare clinics to the Iraqi Ministry of Health. The PHCs have the capacity to treat 4.6 million outpatients annually.



An Iraqi woman holds her son after getting a checkup at the new \$500,000 Al Jumhoury Primary Healthcare Clinic in Diwaniyah Province.



مدير عام الصحة في الديوانية الدكتور عبدالأمير العبيدي، في الوسط، وقائد فريق إعادة اعمار الديوانية مايكل كليتشسكي، يسار، يفتتحان رسمياً مستوصف الجمهوري للرعاية الصحية الأولية في الثامن من آذار.

الديوانية ترحب بمستوصف للرعاية الصحية الأولية

بقلم أليشيا أمبراي
قسم الجنوب في فرقة منطقة الخليج

وسلمت فرقة منطقة الخليج ١٣٢ مستوصف رعاية صحية في أرجاء العراق الى وزارة الصحة العراقية، وبإمكان هذه المستوصفات تقديم الرعاية الصحية الى ٤,٦ مليون مريض خارجي في العام.

البناء الشاقة". وأضاف ان "بناء منشآت كهذه يتطلب شراكة بين العراق وبين الولايات المتحدة ... أرجو أن يكون هذا المستوصف دائماً رمزاً لما يمكن أن يحققه العمل معاً."



مستوصف الرعاية الصحية الذي تم انجازه بتكلفة نصف مليون دولار والذي يقدم الرعاية الصحية الى نحو ١٥ ألف نسمة من أهالي الديوانية.

جتمعت حشد من سكان الديوانية ومسؤولين عراقيين وأميركيين في الثامن من آذار ليتحفلوا بافتتاح مستوصف الجمهوري للرعاية الصحية الأولية في الديوانية.

وخلال مراسم قص الشريط، تقدم مدير عام الصحة في الديوانية الدكتور عبدالأمير العبيدي بالشكر الى فريق إعادة اعمار المحافظات، وإلى فرقة منطقة الخليج، وإلى المقاول العراقي لجهودهم في بناء مرفق عالي الجودة كهذا المستوصف.

وأشار مساعد المهندس المقيم الذي يعمل لدى فرقة منطقة الخليج الى ان المستوصف الحديث يضم أربعة مكاتب للأطباء تجاورها غرف الفحص، وردهتين لطب الأسنان وغرفة الأشعة السينية ومختبراً وصيدلية وغرفتي معالجة وصفا دراسياً، وقال "صمم (المستوصف) ليقدم الرعاية الصحية الأساسية لسكان هذا الحي البالغ عددهم ١٥ ألف نسمة، ويوفر تشخيصاً متقدماً وبإمكانه مراقبة الحالات المرضية الحادة والمزمنة".

وقال قائد فريق إعادة اعمار مدينة الديوانية مايكل كليتشسكي "تطلب بناء هذا المستوصف تعاون وشجاعة وتصميم وبخاصة من جانب العراقيين الذين ساعدوا في تصميم المشروع وأشرفوا على أعمال البناء وقاموا بأعمال



The USACE's Gulf Region South district oversaw the construction of the 118,470-sq-foot two-story Basra Regional Courthouse. The courthouse includes courtrooms and office space for judges, judge deputies, and administrative personnel, as well as a protection facility.

Basra's new courthouse another sign of progress for Iraq's judiciary system

BY A. AL BAHRANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Hundreds gathered as Iraqi officials hosted a ribbon cutting Feb. 26 marking the completion of the new \$10.9 million regional courthouse in Basra.

"Opening this facility is an important step," said Iraqi Judiciary Commission Chairman Medhatt Al Mahmoud. "We had just 500 judges in Iraq in 2003, and now we have about 1,500 judges. Our judicial system has made significant progress in the past four years.

"Judicial independence is critical to a stable social structure. The rule of law is a prerequisite for political stability, economic development and public confidence in public institutions," Mahmoud added.

Ceremony attendees included Basra Governor Mohamad El Wa'eli; Maj. Gen. Andy Salmon, commanding general of Multi-National Division – South East; Basra Chief Justice Laith Abdul Sammad, as well as members of the Iraqi Security Forces and the Coalition.

Wa'eli said, "We are gathered here today to open an important project that will significantly establish the rule of law not only in Basra Province, but in Iraq. This facility will play a very critical role in achieving justice and equality for our Iraqi society."

Laith said, "This magnificent project could not have been completed without the support of the U.S. government and specifically the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers."

USACE's Gulf Region South district oversaw the construction of the 118,470-sq-foot two-story facility. The courthouse includes four main courtrooms, three smaller courtrooms, and 248 smaller offices for judges, judge deputies, and administrative personnel. It includes a 17,216-sq-foot witness protection facility, two cafeterias, five elevators, and six small kiosks for food vendors.

USACE construction representative Keith Adams pointed out, "The contractor, Al Dayer United Construction, is from Basra, and I know first-hand the extra work, effort, and love that he put into the courthouse. He wanted to build a structure that would stand for generations. His crew made

many sacrifices, and took great risks to themselves and their families because they believed in what they were doing."

"Seeing the Basra community so excited about their new courthouse, and knowing I played a small part touches my heart in a big way. It's times like this that make our job so worthwhile," Adams concluded.

The USACE Gulf Region Division has completed more than 300 other projects related to security and justice, including border posts, point of entry facilities, fire stations, courthouses and correctional facilities. In all, more than 4,400 projects are complete, including water supply and treatment projects, electricity infrastructure, healthcare facilities and schools.



Basra Governor Mohamad El Wa'eli addresses the hundreds of attendees gathered together to open the new Basra Regional Courthouse.



مبنى قصر العدالة في البصرة الذي أشرفت على بنائه فرقة منطقة الخليج، فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأمريكي، والذي تبلغ مساحته نحو ١١٨ ألف قدم مربع ويتألف من طابقين.

انجاز مبنى محكمة البصرة تعزيزا لتطبيق القانون في العراق

بقلم ع. البحراني
قسم الجنوب في فرقة منطقة الخليج

وأشار ممثل أعمال البناء كيث آدمز الى ان "المقاول المتعاقد من البصرة، وأنا شخصيا أعرف مقدار العمل والجهد والتفاني الذي قدمه في دار المحكمة. فهو أراد أن يبني دار محكمة تقاوم لأجيال، وخاطر عماله بأنفسهم وعائلاتهم لأنهم آمنوا بالعمل الذي أنجزوه". وختم آدمز بالقول "تثير مشاعري بدرجة كبيرة رؤية سكان البصرة وهم متحمسون لدار محكمتهم الجديدة، وكوني لعبت دورا صغيرا فيها. ان لحظات كهذه تجعل عملنا ذا قيمة".

وسلمت فرقة منطقة الخليج أكثر من ٣٠٠ مشروعا أخرى متعلقة بالأمن وتطبيق القانون، ضمنها مخافر حدودية ومنافذ الدخول ومحطات اطفاء الحريق ودور المحاكم ومنشآت الإصلاح. وبالإجمال، فقد سلمت الفرقة أكثر من ٤٤٠٠ مشروعا الى حكومة العراق، ضمنها مشروعات تنقية المياه وأخرى تتعلق بالبنية التحتية للكهرباء والرعاية الطبية والمدارس.

الأمن العراقية وقوات التحالف. وقال الوائلي "نجتمع هنا اليوم لكي نفتتح مشروعا مهما سيعزز تطبيق القانون بنحو مهم، ليس فقط في محافظة البصرة، ولكن في العراق. سيلعب هذا المرفق دورا مهما في تطبيق العدالة والمساواة لمجتمعنا العراقي". من جهته، قال القاضي ليث ان "هذا المشروع الضخم تم بدعم من حكومة الولايات المتحدة وبخاصة فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأمريكي".

وأشرف قسم الجنوب في فرقة منطقة الخليج، فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي، على أعمال البناء في المرفق المؤلف من طابقين والذي تبلغ مساحته ١١ ألف متر مربع. ويضم مبنى المحكمة أربع غرف محاكمة وثلاث غرف أخرى اصغر منها، و٢٤٨ مكتبا للقضاة ومساعدتهم والاداريين. كما تضم مبنى لحماية الشهود تبلغ مساحته ١٦٠٠ متر مربع، ومطعمين وخمسة مصاعد وستة أكشاك لبيع الطعام.

اجتمع مئات الأشخاص حول مسؤولين عراقيين كانوا يقطعون الشريط في ٢٦ شباط محتفلين بانجاز مبنى المحكمة الجديدة في البصرة بتكلفة ١٠,٩ مليون دولار. وقال رئيس مجلس القضاء العراقي مدحت المحمود ان "افتتاح هذا المرفق هو خطوة مهمة ... في عام ٢٠٠٣ كان في العراق ٩٠٠ قاض فحسب والان لدينا نحو ١٥٠٠ قاض. أحرز نظامنا القضائي تقدما كبيرا في الأعوام الأربعة الماضية".

وأضاف ان "استقلال القضاء ضروري لبنية اجتماعية مستقرة، وان تطبيق القانون شرط مسبق ضروري للاستقرار السياسي والتنمية الاقتصادية وثقة الناس في الدوائر العامة".

وحضر المراسم كل من محافظ البصرة محمد الوائلي والقائد العام للفرقة المتعددة الجنسيات - جنوب شرق الميجر جنرال أندي سالمون، ورئيس محكمة استئناف البصرة ليث عبدالصمد، فضلا عن ممثلين عن قوات



The dormitories at the new Irbil Orphanage and Senior Center will provide separate housing for 250 boys, 250 girls and 100 indigent senior citizens.

Irbil facility provides safe homes for orphans, senior citizens

BY MIKE SCHECK
GULF REGION NORTH DISTRICT

February 12 was a day of celebration in the 4,300-year-old city of Irbil in the northern Kurdish region of Iraq. The Kurdistan Regional Government; the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq; and contract partners gathered to celebrate the completion of the Irbil Orphanage and Senior Center.

The new facility provides a home for some of the city's most vulnerable citizens and stands on the site of the old substandard orphanage, built in 1967.

Although the local Kurdish society is traditionally built on extended family support networks, the instability in Iraq during the past decade has disrupted that social network system. The Kurdish Regional Government determined that it must take a more active role to both provide a safe living environment for these special needs residents and offer them rehabilitation programs to ensure that they can integrate into society as contributing citizens.

The new \$3.7 million facility has almost twice the capacity of the old orphanage and can accommodate 250 boys and 250 girls in separate dormitories. One hundred destitute senior citizens, who have no alternative means of support, will also live at the new center. Assisted living is a new concept for the region, and planners

consider it a logical combination to have homeless children share a facility with senior citizens.

"In the United States, we're starting to see day care centers on assisted living properties because seniors and kids get along well together," said Gary York, the area engineer for the Gulf Region North district's Irbil Resident Office.

The new facility also has a unique look and modern functional design. At the heart is the multipurpose room, surrounded by six three-story resident halls. The buildings were designed so that the small children's playground is located in front of the seniors' home. Other conveniences for the senior center include a hydraulic elevator, extra wide doors and handicap-accessible tubs and showers.

"The Americans with Disabilities Act is of course unfamiliar to the Iraqi people," York said. "However, there are many features required by the act built into the new facility." Those features include fire alarms, high-quality hardware and kitchenettes in each resident facility.

"Many responsible individuals and companies from the local area have made generous donations for equipment and furnishing. There is no greater service to your country and community than helping the underprivileged," York said.

The general contractor for the project was the Zeezna Company.

"The Corps of Engineers was offered a unique opportunity to partner with the Zeezna Company to build a facility that serves such a noble cause: the care of Irbil's orphans and senior citizens," explained Col. Margaret Burcham, commander of the Gulf Region North district. "We have taken that opportunity to create a structure that is both beautiful and functional and one that serves as a lasting testament to USACE's commitment to the reconstruction efforts in Irbil.

"This project represents tremendous efforts by dedicated people who have worked together to make a difference in the lives of these special citizens of Irbil," she added.

Other amenities constructed on the orphanage site include a playground, swimming pool, soccer field, guard house, administration building, garden lot, exterior water tanks and parking lot.

USACE's Gulf Region Division has completed more than 4,400 projects in Iraq, valued at nearly \$7 billion. These projects are helping meet the basic needs of the Iraqi people by providing essential services like electricity generation, clean water, sewage treatment, schools and medical facilities.



شركاء البناء، ضمنهم قسم الشمال في فرقة منطقة الخليج، ومسؤولون حكوميون يجتمعون في دار الأيتام ومركز المسنين في أربيل، ستوفر هذه الدار ماوى لنحو ٥٠٠ يتيم ویتيمة ونحو مائة مسن.

انجاز دار أيتام ومركز للمسنين في أربيل يخدم ضعفاء المحافظة

بقلم مايك شبيك
قسم الشمال في فرقة منطقة الخليج

كان يوم ١٢ شباط يوم احتفال مميز في أربيل، المحافظة التي نشأت قبل ٤٣٠٠ عاما في منطقة كردستان في شمالي العراق، واجتمع للاحتفال بانجاز دار أربيل للأيتام ومركز المسنين كل من حكومة كردستان وفرقة منطقة الخليج، فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي، والشركاء من المقاولين.

ويوفر المرفق الجديد ماوى لبعض سكان المدينة الضعفاء، وبني على موقع دار الأيتام القديمة التي بنيت في ١٩٦٧. وعلى الرغم من مراعاة المجتمع الكردي لشبكات الدعم العائلية، فان الاضطراب في العراق خلال العقد الماضي عطل نظام الشبكة الاجتماعية هذا. وقررت حكومة كردستان ان عليها تولي دور أكثر فعالية لكي تهئ معيشة آمنة لهؤلاء المواطنين وهم بحاجة الى مسكن، وتقدم برامج اعادة تأهيل لضمان انهم سيندمجون في المجتمع كمواطنين مسهمين فيه.

ويتسع المرفق الجديد بتكلفة ٣,٧ ملايين دولار لنحو ضعف الطاقة الاستيعابية للدار القديمة، وبإمكانه ايواء ٢٥٠ صبياً و ٢٥٠ صبية في ردهات منفصلة، وسوف يعيش في المركز مائة محتاج كبير السن ممن لا وسائل دعم بديلة لديهم.

ان المساعدة في المعيشة هي مفهوم جديد لهذه المنطقة، ويعد المخططون للمشروع أنه من المنطقي جمع الاطفال المشردين مع كبار

السن في هذا المرفق. وقال مهندس المنطقة غاري يورك الذي يعمل لدى مكتب أربيل المقيم في قسم الشمال في فرقة منطقة الخليج "بدأنا نرى في الولايات المتحدة مراكز الرعاية النهارية التي تقدم المساعدة المعيشية للأطفال والكبار فهم ينسجمون معا بنحو جيد".

وللمرفق الجديد تصميمه الفريد والعصري، وفي وسطه ردهة متعددة الأغراض، محاطة بست قاعات للاقامة تتألف الواحدة منها من ثلاثة طوابق. المباني مصممة بحيث تقع ملاعب الأطفال أمام دار المسنين. وهناك مزايا أخرى لمركز المسنين تشمل مصعدا يعمل بقوة ضغط السوائل. وفيه أبواب واسعة وأحواض استحمام وحمامات للمعاقين.

وأضاف يورك ان "قانون المعاقين الأميركيين هو بالطبع غير مألوف بالنسبة للعراقيين ... ومع ذلك فهناك الكثير من المزايا التي ينص عليها ذلك القانون متوفرة في هذا المرفق الجديد". وتشمل هذه الميزات أجهزة الانذار بالحريق ومعدات عالية الجودة ولوازم المطبخ في كل مرفق سكن.

وقال "قدم العديد من الأشخاص ذوي المسؤولية والشركات وأهل المنطقة تبرعات سخية في صور معدات وأثاث. لا توجد هناك خدمة أفضل للبلد والمجتمع من تقديم العون للمحرومين".

ونفذت أعمال البناء للمشروع شركة زيزنا. من جهتها، قالت قائد قسم الشمال في فرقة منطقة الخليج الكولونيل ماركرين برتشم "سنتح لفيلق المهندسين فرصة فريدة في المشاركة مع شركة زيزنا لكي يبنى هذا المرفق الذي يخدم هدفا نبيلاً كهذا: رعاية الأيتام والمسنين في أربيل".

وأضافت "اغتنمنا تلك الفرصة لكي نبنى بناءً فيه صفتان: جمال التصميم والنفع، وهناك شيء آخر ينفع بكونه شهادة على دوام التزام فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأمريكي جهود الاعمار في محافظة أربيل"، مضيفاً ان "هذا المشروع يمثل جهوداً جبارة قام بها أشخاص متفانون في عملهم عملوا معا لكي يحدثوا فرقا في حياة هؤلاء المواطنين في أربيل".

وشيدت على موقع دار الأيتام مرافق أخرى ضمنها ملعب وحمام سباحة وملعب لكرة القدم ومنزل الحرس ومبنى الإدارة وحديقة كبيرة وخزانات مياه خارجية وموقف للسيارات. وأشرفت فرقة منطقة الخليج، فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأمريكي، على أكثر من ٤٤٠٠ مشروعاً في العراق تبلغ قيمتها ٧ مليارات دولار. وتساعد هذه المشروعات في تلبية الاحتياجات الأساسية للشعب العراقي عن طريق توفير الخدمات الأساسية مثل الكهرباء والمياه النظيفة ومعالجة مياه الصرف الصحي والمدارس والمنشآت الطبية.



Shakir Ne'ma abid-own, director general of education for Diwaniyah Province, (far right) and Michael Klecheski, Diwaniyah Provincial Reconstruction Team lead, (center) were among those officiating at the Feb. 26 opening ceremony for the new school for girls.

Diwaniyah celebrates opening of new school for girls

BY A. ALICIA EMBREY

GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Female students in Diwaniyah are celebrating the unveiling of a new secondary school for girls.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at the Al Irshad Secondary School for Girls Feb. 26 to celebrate the completion of the new \$1.2 million facility. The 12-classroom, multi-level school includes a laboratory, library, storage rooms and administrative buildings for 360 students. Iraqi contractor Al-Kahlaa Company began the project in December 2007 and employed 50 local men during construction.

Speakers at the ceremony included Shakir Ne'ma abid-own, director general of education for Diwaniyah Province; Michael Klecheski, lead for the Diwaniyah Provincial Reconstruction Team; and Lt. Col. Dwight Davies, the officer in charge of the Diwaniyah-Najaf Resident Office for the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq.

Shakir thanked everyone involved with the project for their efforts, saying it was quite an achievement. "We need more schools like this because most lack such good construction," he added.

Klecheski pointed out that "in Iraq, in the United States, in every society that I know of, education is among the things people value most for their children. And so, we come here today to celebrate the opening of a new school. We celebrate a school with classrooms and hallways in which young women will be able to develop into productive members of the new Iraq that is growing around us all."

"Construction of this new school was itself a reflection of that new Iraq," Klecheski continued. "It took courage and determination to bring it to completion, especially on the part of those Iraqis who did the work, oversaw it, and brought us to this day." The United States of America is proud to have played its part in financing the project, he said, and proud to have worked so closely with Iraqi engineers and builders in seeing it through to completion. "May this school always stand as a symbol of partnership between our countries," he added.

USACE personnel from the Diwaniyah-Najaf Resident Office provided construction management for the school. "We are making a difference – you can see it in the smiles of the local residents who are diligently working everyday to provide a brighter future for their children and grandchildren," said Davies. "The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its partners are building strong today to help Iraq move forward for tomorrow."

USACE has completed more than 4,400 projects in Iraq. More than a quarter of those are schools and educational facilities for the Iraqi people. With more than 1,100 schools completed, hundreds of thousands of students now learn in modern facilities that meet international health and safety standards.

Kirkuk landfill first of its kind in Iraq; helps solve garbage problem

BY MIKE SCHECK

GULF REGION NORTH DISTRICT

Engineers estimate that Kirkuk residents discard 900 tons of trash a day. So like other major cities in the world, Kirkuk is facing the age-old problem: what to do with all that trash. The city is serious about solving its garbage problem and the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq is part of a joint, multi-national effort to provide solutions.

For years Kirkuk residents have been dumping their garbage into unregulated areas or merely unloading it in open fields outside the city. This unrestricted dumping has the potential to cause serious health, environmental and public safety concerns.

To solve the city's garbage problem, the Coalition Forces Brigade Combat Team initiated a sustained Solid Waste Management Program for Kirkuk in 2005. To find an environmentally safe solution to the city's garbage collection and disposal dilemma, the BCT partnered with the Kirkuk Municipality, the Kirkuk Provincial Government, the Provincial Reconstruction Team-Kirkuk, U.S. Agency for International Development and the USACE Gulf Region Division.

The central piece to the initiative is the \$8.8 million sanitary landfill project, which meets both the highest U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and European Union Landfill Directive standards. This site represents the first environmentally engineered and constructed landfill in Iraq. The landfill project, built using the Commander's Emergency Response Program fund, was completed by the Irbil-based Zana Group in February 2008. The 48-acre site is located 10 miles south of Kirkuk and has an expected lifespan of 10-12 years according to the engineers.

To increase the capacity of landfill sites and to conform to current EPA standards, solid waste must now be processed through a transfer waste station where garbage is compacted. The Kirkuk landfill will soon have two solid waste transfer stations to provide added



A garbage truck offloads trash at Solid Waste Transfer Station #1, located south of Kirkuk, Iraq. The \$2.5 million facility has the capacity to handle 300 tons of waste per day.

capacity and to compact the trash before being transferred to the landfill.

The Gulf Region North district's Kirkuk Area Office is the contract manager for the construction of the solid waste transfer sites. The Dalo Construction Company of Kirkuk completed the first transfer station, located south of the city, in December 2007. The second solid waste site, located just north of the city, is scheduled for completion in June. Each station has the capacity to handle 300 tons of waste per day. At full capacity, eight tractor trailers transfer the 18 40-ton capacity transfer trailers to the landfill site continuously throughout the day.

"The first waste transfer station is being fully utilized and the Iraqis are implementing some of their own ideas at the waste transfer station. For example, they are removing large pieces of metal from the trash for potential recycling," explained Lt. Col. J.B. Chadwick, officer in charge of the Kirkuk Area Office. "The site of the second waste transfer station was selected due to its proximity to the Kirkuk Ring Road project, which will allow quick and easy access to the site

from the City of Kirkuk and from the waste transfer station to the landfill."

The price tag for each solid waste site is \$2.5 million with funding for the projects coming from several agencies including the United Nations Office of Project Services. The Development Group Iraq Trust Fund is paying for the city's garbage trucks. The Republic of Korea donated the collection vehicles and loaders used at the sites.

The solid waste sites and landfill will employ more than 700 local workers, adding good paying jobs and a much-needed boost to the city's local economy. The major concern by the solid waste project partners was how to sustain such a massive operation after the subject matter experts leave Iraq. To keep Kirkuk's solid waste plan in place for the long-term, the agencies instituted training in all aspects of the operation. U.S. Air Force technicians currently conduct vehicle and maintenance training with employees and the Research Triangle Institute International instructs local managers on landfill operations, maintenance and site management training.

The Kirkuk Solid Waste Project is a model that can be used for Iraqis to learn proper waste management practices and will dispense with the need to travel to foreign countries to obtain information about solid waste management, according to USACE officials.



Work progresses on Solid Waste Transfer Station #2, located north of Kirkuk. Current EPA standards require that solid waste be processed through a transfer waste station to increase the capacity of landfill sites.



A renovated barracks provides new facilities for cadets attending the Iraq Military Academy Rustamiyah. The academy is the sole training site for air force cadets preparing for flight training.

USACE, Air Force partner to improve learning, living environment at Iraq's air force academy

BY KENDAL SMITH
GULF REGION CENTRAL DISTRICT

A joint effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Air Force is improving the training facilities for Iraq's air force cadets. The \$1.96 million rehabilitation project at the Iraq Military Academy Rustamiyah includes five major components that will greatly enhance the learning and living environment for future Iraqi air force officers.

The academy, established by the British in 1924, serves as the sole site for training Iraqi air force cadets. Cadets learn essential skills there, including English, before commissioning as officers ready



The renovations included the installation of a state-of-the-art audio visual system in one of the theater-style classrooms.

for flight training. English is taught because it's the mandatory international language for aviation communication.

Personnel from the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq and the Air Force's 321st Air Expeditionary Training Group oversaw the rehabilitation of the academy's aging infrastructure. Work, which began in November, was largely complete in February and included expanding the air wing training building, renovating the campus water towers to provide potable water, repairing aging facilities, updating the existing cadet barracks, and

constructing a new 300-person dorm from the rubble of an abandoned building.

According to U.S. Air Force Capt. Mickey Jordan, the academy's renovation is the first effort between USACE engineers and the Coalition Air Force Training Team. Planners conferred jointly with Iraqi air force lieutenants, former IMAR cadets, who helped identify more than two-dozen critical points requiring redesign.

Additional features of the project included a dining facility, renovated barracks from the inside out, instructors' quarters, classrooms, a small theater and a large auditorium, as well as new generators, air conditioners, and audio-visual systems.

In January, work was completed on renovated barracks. As Iraqi engineer Hamed flipped the switch, sending power to 33 heating units in the barracks, cadets cheered and rushed out to shake his hand. "I used to try to sleep, freezing under two blankets, but now our lives are much better," commented one cadet.



An Iraqi technician installs electrical conduit for use in the renovated instructor housing at Rustamiyah.



The 4th Regional Patrol Forces Command's new military vehicle and boat maintenance facility is overseen by deputy commander, Col. Aqeel Lafta, left, and commander, Col. Tariq Jabar, center. Here they discuss features of the facility with Gary Gatewood, a construction representative with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Border patrol forces in Basra setting up for success

BY A. AL BAHRANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

A new military maintenance facility in Basra is providing members of Iraq's 4th Regional Border Patrol Forces Command the capability to efficiently maintain vehicles and boats used to patrol and secure the Iraq/Iran border. Construction of the \$550,000 facility began last fall and was completed in early February.

"Now we have adequate space with the new three-bay modern structure to repair and provide routine service for our vehicles and boats," said Col. Aqeel Lafta, deputy commander of the new facility. "The old facility was small and crowded all the time. I have a staff of five officers and 50 Iraqi soldiers and technicians who work here and the new facility definitely enhances our capabilities," he added.

The new state-of-the-art structure allows personnel to efficiently maintain vehicles and boats that are used to patrol and provide security along the Iraq and Iran border, explained Gary Gatewood, a construction representative with the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq.

"Each bay has a compressed air line to power their pneumatic hand tools, and an exhaust vent line to prevent carbon monoxide build up allowing them to work in a safe environment when the bay doors are closed," Gatewood added.

The facility includes rooms for properly storing and recharging vehicle batteries, storing spare parts, as well as a tool room. A new 80 kilovolt generator has also been constructed on site.

The facility was built by an Iraqi contractor, who employed 50 local Iraqis on the construction crew.



The military maintenance facility gives border patrol forces in Basra the capability to efficiently maintain vehicles and boats used to patrol and secure the border between Iraq and Iran.



Deployed soldier's stateside co-workers send toys to Iraqi youngsters

BY NORRIS JONES
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Friends and co-workers of a deployed Illinois soldier sent donated toys to southern Iraq, generating loads of smiles from Iraqi youngsters, who visited the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South district's headquarters at Tallil Air Base on Feb. 17.

Approximately 30 Iraqi students from Nasiriyah's Mama Suna Primary School arrived at GRS headquarters beaming with huge smiles. The children held flowers, which they presented to the Americans who greeted them. The children sang a song in English that started, "Father, mother, I am sick – get the doctor quick, quick quick," recited their A-B-C's, and then sang a song in Arabic.

Staff from GRS greeted the youngsters alongside members of the Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion, 133rd Field Artillery out of Ft. Bliss, Texas; and the Alpha Company, 445th Civil Affairs from Mountain View, Calif. They grilled hamburgers, served pizza, played games with the children and then presented each child with a toy, soccer ball and book bag filled with school supplies.

The gifts were all items Maj. Robert Kirkpatrick's friends and co-workers back in Illinois shipped over for the children of Iraq. Kirkpatrick, a member of the 416th Theater Engineer Command, headquartered in Darien, Ill., explained that he'd received numerous e-mails from home asking what he needed. He suggested sending toys that could be delivered to neighboring Iraqi schools during visits by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees.

Kirkpatrick, an Army Reserve soldier, works as a senior process engineer for Aux Sable Liquid Products located in Channahon, Ill., near Morris, where the company's natural gas plant is located.

His co-workers took up a collection and sent him a couple large boxes containing "a great variety of nice toys," including cars, dolls, stuffed animals, a big fire engine, colorful sleeping bags, pillows, and a CD player. "It's a great company to work for and they've been very supportive of my deployment here," noted Kirkpatrick, who has 23 years of military service.

Kirkpatrick is the operations officer at GRS. The district is overseeing more than 130 construction projects in Iraq's nine southern provinces. The projects include new schools, hospitals,

courthouses, roads, bridges and new water treatment facilities that in some cases are providing communities with access to clean water for the first time ever.

Kirkpatrick says he joined the Army "to get more focused on my future. I went from being a poor high school student to being a much better college student after three years active duty." He later joined the National Guard and then switched to the Army Reserve and during the past two decades has seen much of the world, including Panama, El Salvador and Germany. This is his third tour to Iraq in the past five years.

"Working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is a great assignment. We have an important mission," Kirkpatrick explained. "Things are improving here and you can see that the Iraqis are on the right path. It's encouraging."

"I've had great support from my family, friends, and co-workers in Illinois since deploying in November," Kirkpatrick said. "Through phone calls, emails, and letters we're able to stay in touch. They've all stepped up and are helping fill in for me stateside so I can concentrate on my duties here. I sincerely appreciate all they do."



Iraqi youths enjoy the toys provided by Maj. Robert Kirkpatrick's Illinois co-workers.

From the kindness of your hearts

During a site visit to a sewage lift station in Eastern Baghdad, the Aegis Reconstruction Liaison team met a young boy with severe birth defects which left him unable to walk. His only mode of transport was his 7-year-old sister, who had to carry him. His family lived in squalor, had no warm clothing and very few blankets.

The cost of distributing a wheelchair, blankets and a few toys was a mere \$300. This is an example of where donations from the GRD Enduring Impressions program are put to valuable use. The impact was reported by the team as;

"The initial scepticism of the local populous to the team's presence soon changed to happy smiles and positive comments. One of the team members overheard two males referring to the team as "The good people who have come to help the disabled child".

None of this would be possible without the support and donations from GRD personnel in Iraq, GRD personnel and their families at home in the United States, and from the Aegis Foundation. We thank you all. If you are interested in making a donation, or would like more information about our ongoing projects, please contact Sarah Smith or Kevin Halborg at RCA@aegisiraq.com



A young Iraqi handicapped child with his new transportation and toys from the GRD Enduring Impressions program.



Master Sgt. Ronaldo J Sanders, Operations Noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Gulf Region Central district, deliver toys to an Iraqi girl.



A pet therapy visit to the Combat Support Hospital in the International Zone brought smiles to children and adults.



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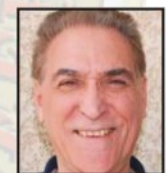
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